

Nebraska Commission on the Status of Women
Quarterly Meeting Minutes
October 26, 2007
Wayne, NE

Commissioners present: Kathy McKillip (9:40AM), Teresa Maxwell, Barb Micek, Betty Reeg, Jennifer Gutierrez, Jolanda Junge-Kuzma, Bernadette Esposito

Government liaison: Liz Hruska (10:10AM)

Commissioners excused: John Nejad, Anne Hobbs, Barb McPhillips, Kathy Bradley

Commissioners absent: Charlene Hirsh, Megan Lucas

Guest: Jan Olsten, Columbus NE—NCSW advocate in Western Nebraska

Call to order: 9:20AM by Vice-Chair Bernadette Esposito.

Roll call was taken by Bernadette who served as interim secretary in lieu of Anne Hobbs who could not attend.

Welcome and introductions of guest and members; gratitude expressed to our hostess Betty Reeg for her hospitality!

Notification of Public Notice: Upon the arrival of Chairwoman Kathy McKillip, members were informed that Public Notice of the NCSW Quarterly Meeting was posted electronically on the NCSW website for public meetings. Copies of the Public Notice were available at the meeting.

Approval of Agenda:

** Jolanda suggested amending the agenda by moving the discussion of the financial report and the NCSW Updates, fundraising update/ opportunities to the end of the day.

MOTION: By Jolanda to approve the agenda with the above changes.

SECOND: Jennifer Gutierrez

VOTE: Unanimous in favor.

Approval of July 27, 2007 minutes:

MOTION: By Jolanda Junge-Kuzma to accept the July 27, 2007 minutes as written.

SECOND: Teresa Maxwell

VOTE: Unanimous in favor

Fall 2007 Planning: External work and internal improvement.

** Discussion about the present status of the Commission and outsider perceptions about the NCSW. Kathy presented details of her conversation with her state senator. He had offered his opinion as to the two different perceptions of the NCSW held by his fellow

senators. These perceptions must be acknowledged, addressed and have a “reality-adjustment.”

** Due to significant internal issues in 2006/ early 2007, concomitant negative publicity and subsequent defunding by the Unicameral, there has been little visible “external” activity by the NCSW. The remarkable exception is the Displaced Dreams project.

** Jennifer and Jolanda offered their thoughts on how to shift our focus in order to “move out” and restore our credibility as a visible and effective agency serving the women and families of Nebraska.

** Jennifer offered a proposal for a media awareness campaign: *Is this OK with you?*

** Lengthy discussion followed about the subjects to be addressed, the timeline and the areas of the state that would be targeted, and how this media campaign would be conducted. Goals of the media campaign would be statewide awareness, building grassroots interest and support, and garnering the attention and support of state senators.

** Jennifer and Kathy volunteered to spearhead the media campaign and Barb Micek will review their efforts. Various local and statewide publications will be recipients of their work. Bernadette will handle any letter-writing that is needed.

MOTION: Jennifer moved that the NCSW adopt her proposal for the “*Is this OK with you?*” media blitz as discussed.

SECOND: Jolanda

VOTE: Unanimous approval.

Meeting break 11:10AM

Meeting resumed 11:20AM

**Kathy said that Senator Avery and his legislative aide were willing to work with the NCSW on rewriting the statute. Anticipated introduction of the statute revisions is during the upcoming 2008 session. Kathy volunteered to be the liaison for this with November 15 as the date of first draft. Commissioners expressed interest in reviewing proposed changes.

MOTION: Jolanda moved that Kathy McKillip and Bonnie Coffey work with Senator Avery to review and revise the NCSW statutes, and that suggested revisions would be submitted to the Commissioners for their review and feedback.

SECOND: Betty Reeg

VOTE: Unanimous approval

** Discussion of Teresa’s suggestions for statute and by-law changes. Commissioners also discussed Bonnie Coffey’s offer to draft same. Kathy thought Anne was interested in working on the by-laws revision. It is feasible to expect there could be revised by-laws submitted for discussion at the January quarterly meeting.

Financial report: In lieu of John Nejad who could not attend, Kathy distributed the Budget Status Report prepared by William.

** Discussion of the budget by members.

MOTION: Jolanda moved that the Budget Report be approved as submitted

SECOND: Barb Micek

VOTE: Unanimous approval

Displaced Dreams Update: Barb Micek

** It is finished!

** Barb had all of the completed posters displayed on easels. She told the Commissioners about all of the people who she had interviewed and were featured on the posters.

** Commissioners praised Barb for her dedication and hard work, and congratulated her on the completion of the project.

** Barb has received very positive feedback from all who have participated in the project. She said the public and government agencies need to know about the serious circumstances many people find themselves in. One woman told her, "There is no dignity left in the government."

** Discussion about opportunities to promote Displaced Dreams and NCSW—brochures, flyers, magazine articles.

** Kathy and Barb will look into having the Displaced Dreams posters displayed in the Capitol rotunda during the Unicameral session, at the state office building, colleges in Lincoln and Omaha. Commissioners agreed there should be press releases to accompany any of the displays.

** There is an opportunity for a display booth at an upcoming Nebraska Community Improvement Program conference in South Sioux City. Anne will staff the booth.

** The Center for Rural Affairs might also be interested.

Nebraska Women's Foundation:

** Discussion concerning the bylaws of the Women's Foundation, their legal relationship with the NCSW and their authority to fund-raise.

** Commissioners agreed that a letter should be sent to all Foundation members regarding the original intent of the Foundation and its relationship to NCSW. Anne and Bernadette will write the letter to be sent certified mail and regular mail.

New business:

** Meeting dates posted for 2008—January 25 in Lincoln

April 25 in central or western Nebraska

July 25 in Omaha

October 24 in Columbus

** Members agreed that a letter should be written to the governor regarding the non-attendance of two current Commissioners. They have not attended a meeting for a year. Bernadette will write this letter.

Fundraising update and opportunities: Jolanda

** Jolanda described a couple of organizations that the NCSW could make grant application to for assistance with PR, Displaced Dream costs, travel expenses, etc.

** Members decided to wait until we know specifics about the Nebraska Women's Foundation.

Other state womens' commissions: Teresa presented information on a couple women's commissions in other states and the struggles they have had in recent years—including

being defunded and/ or being absorbed into other state agencies. There are also other state commissions who have successfully overcome their obstacles and are active and dynamic. Those will be explored too!

Inventory: Jolanda stated that inventory needs to be done.

Commissioners thanked Betty for her warm welcome, her gracious hospitality and the delicious food she served.

Adjournment: 2:35PM

MOTION: Teresa

SECOND: Jennifer

VOTE: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Bernadette Esposito